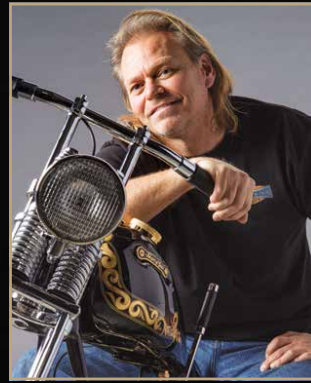




I'm proud of this build and very excited to see it featured in the magazine that helped shape and inspire my life.



Les Covington's 24K 1949 Pan
WRENCH BIKE SHOW'S BEST OF SHOW

Les Covington tells us that "Heart of Gold" was inspired by a friend who rode all over the United States on a 1961 panhead adorned with gold-plated parts. A well-ridden bike, it bore evidence of its travels having nicks and scratches and so forth. The bike was beautiful with all of

its imperfections, and I can only imagine how I would have looked when it was freshly built back in the States. Les says, "I'd never seen any other bikes with gold engine cases other than his, and with warm memories and admiration, I committed to gold for my build."

Les strongly felt that this bike had to have the soul only achieved by using original parts and also by sticking to the early chopper era's building techniques. He kept on track, with almost every part being restored originals, including the wishbone frame, gas tanks, engine, transmission, rear wheel assembly, brakes, and the vintage tires.

The frame required major surgery to straighten, plus Les stretched the front downtubes by 6 inches, the backbone by 3 inches, the rear section by 2 inches, and raked the neck to 42 degrees. The 1949 Tank-Shift gas tanks were cut, sectioned, and welded back together to create a single slimmer gas tank. He also fabbed the stainless exhaust system, tombstone tail-light, fender supports, seat, handlebars, air cleaner, and many less noticeable items.

A major feature is the springer front end, hand-built by Sugar Bear in 1973 in Los Angeles. It turns out Sugar Bear, an icon of the industry, also restored it for Heart of Gold. "The same hands 40 years later...

and a special part of the build thanks to his contribution," Les says.

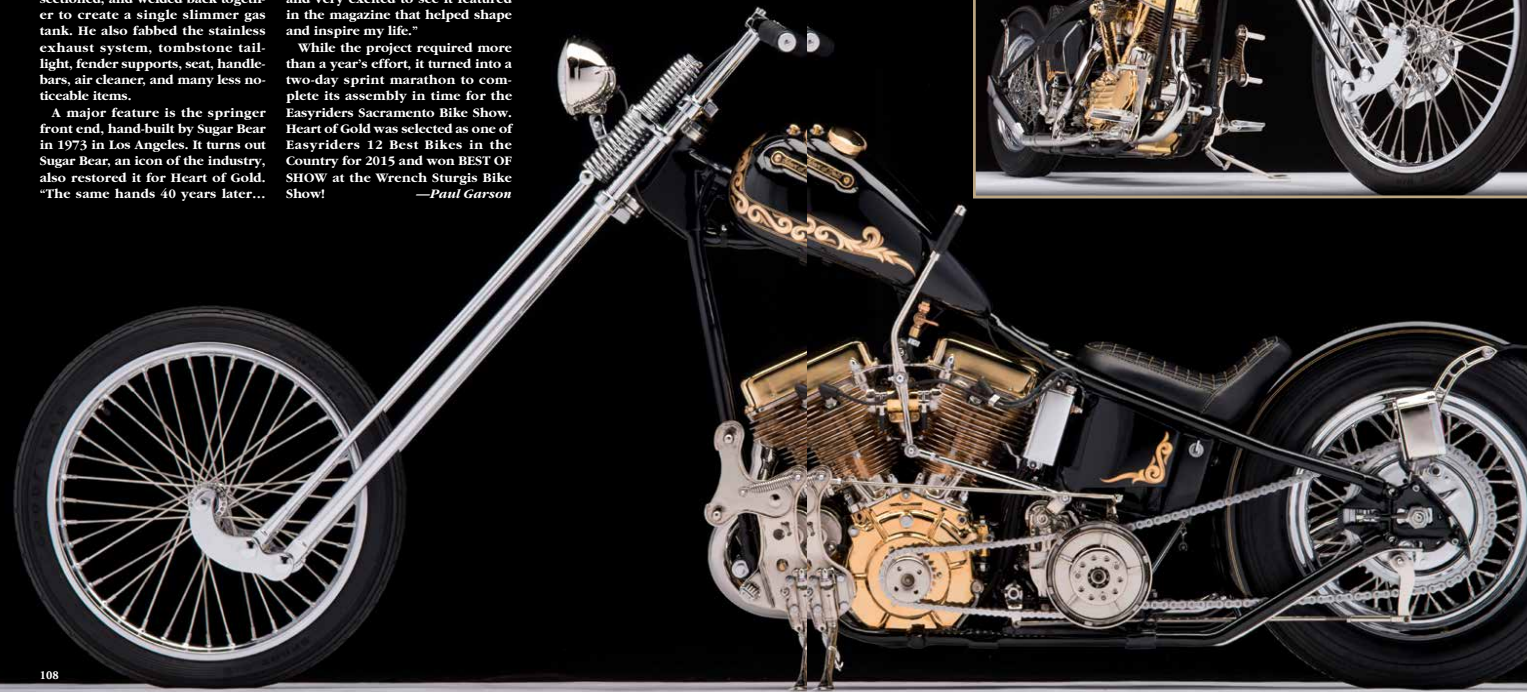
The awesome gold and nickel plating and all the stainless polishing was handled by the father and son team of Tony and Troy Scillia of Pacific Northwest Plating in Vancouver, Washington, while the paint and artwork is by Europe Paint and Mitch Kim.

While the bike definitely has a Heart of Gold, it demands a respectful hand and foot thanks to its open chain primary, hand shift, rocker foot clutch, and no front brake. Says Les, "I'm proud of this build and very excited to see it featured in the magazine that helped shape and inspire my life."

While the project required more than a year's effort, it turned into a two-day sprint marathon to complete its assembly in time for the Easyriders Sacramento Bike Show. Heart of Gold was selected as one of Easyriders 12 Best Bikes in the Country for 2015 and won BEST OF SHOW at the Wrench Sturgis Bike Show!

—Paul Garson

The springer front end was hand-built by Sugar Bear in 1973, who also restored it for Heart of Gold.



Owner: Les Covington
 City: Portland, Oregon
GENERAL
 Designer: Les Covington
 Year/make: 1949 Harley-Davidson
 Model: FL panhead chopper
 Fabrication: Les Covington
 Assembly: Les Covington
 Time: 13 months
 Chroming: gold, nickel, Pacific Northwest Plating
ENGINE
 Year/make: 1949 Harley-Davidson
 Model: FL
 Rebuilder: Les Covington
 Displacement: 74 cu. in.
 Cam: Andrews J solid
 Ignition: Harley-Davidson points
 Pistons: Harley-Davidson
 Lower end: stock Harley-Davidson
 Heads: stock Harley-Davidson 55 O-ring
 Lifters: JIMS solids
Fuel System: Linkert M74B Carb
 Air cleaner: Les Covington
 Pipes: 304 stainless, Les Covington
TRANSMISSION
 Year/make: 1949 Harley-Davidson
 Shifting: 4-speed jockey
PAINT
 Painter: Europa Paint
 Type/color: black, gold
 Special Paint: Mitch Kim gold leaf, stripes
FRAME
 Year/make: 1949 Harley-Davidson
 Type: wishbone rigid
 Rake: 42 degrees
 Stretch: 6 inches
ACCESSORIES
 Bars: Hardtail Choppers
 Handlebar controls: none
 Fenders: Throttle Addiction rear
 Headlight: vintage S&M Lamp Co.
 Taillight: Les Covington
 Electrics: Harley-Davidson
 Gas tank: axed 1949 tanks
 Oil tank: Harley-Davidson
 Oil system: Harley-Davidson
 Seat: Les Covington
 Pegs: Anderson
 Grips: Les Covington
FORKS
 Type: 1973 Sugar Bear springer
 Extension: 18 inches over
WHEELS
 Size: 21-inch front, 16-inch rear
 Wheels: Kelsey Hayes, Star hub
 Tires: vintage Goodyear Speed-Grip
 Brakes: Harley-Davidson drum

Photos: Michael Lichter
 Contact: Covington's Motorcycle Shoppe
 503-799-8828
 covingtonsmotorcycleshoppe.com



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